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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/680,910	10/06/2000	David Grabelsky	97,577-A	2968

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EXAMINER

MEW, KEVIN D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
	2664

DATE MAILED: 08/03/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/680,910	GRABELSKY ET AL. <i>[Signature]</i>
Examiner	Art Unit	
Kevin Mew	2664	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2000.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 28-42 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 28,29,31-33 and 35-40 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 30, 34, 41, 42 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 07 January 1998 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

Detailed Action

Claim Objections

1. Claims 29, 33, 40 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 29, delete the extra "a" in line 1.
In claim 33, delete the extra "a wherein" in line 1.
In claim 40, delete the extra "a" in line 1.
Appropriate correction is required.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. **Claims 28-29, 31-33, 35-38, 39-40** are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 10-12, 16, 21 of U.S. Patent No. 6,169,744. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other. The combination of claims 10, 16 of Patent 6,169,744 will differ from claims 28, 39 of the instant application in that claims 28, 39 of the instant application recite the limitation "selecting on a first station a signal frequency for a desired priority class" and

“selecting on a first station a signal frequency for a highest priority class.” Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the first station to select the highest priority class such that the highest priority class would be considered as the most desired priority class. The motivation to do so is to allow a station with the highest priority class to have a higher priority to transmit data than other stations with a lower priority class because it would allow a network system to adjust a station to be associated with a particular priority level when transmitting data in accordance with the corresponding the system requirement needs.

In addition, claims 28, 39 of the instant application merely narrows the scope of the claims 10, 16 of Patent 6,169,744 by adding the aforementioned elements and their functions to claims 10, 16 of the Patent. It has been held that the addition of an element and its function is an obvious expedient if the remaining elements perform the same function as before. *In re Karlson*, 136 USPQ 184 (CCPA). Also note *Ex parte Rainu*, 168 USPQ 375 (Bd.App.1969); addition of a reference element whose function is not needed would be obvious to one skilled in the art. Therefore, the combination of claim 16 with claim 10 of Patent 6,169,744 would render claims 28, 39 not patentably distinct.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 30, 34, 41, 42 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if the double patenting rejection set forth in claim 28 above can be overcome.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure with respect to a method and protocol for a medium access control layer for use in local area networks with multiple-priority traffic.

US Patent 6,141,336 to Bauchot et al.

US Patent 5,886,993 to Ruszczyk et al.

US Patent 5,615,212 to Ruszczyk et al.

US Patent 4,726,018 to Bux et al.

US Patent 5,729,542 to Dupont

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Mew whose telephone number is 703-305-5300. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 am - 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wellington Chin can be reached on 703-305-4366. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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